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CYPRIAN MASQUES

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CYPRIAN MASQUES

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LUCIAN



I

FOREWORD

I translated these episodes in such enchanting surroundings that I cannot resist speaking a little of them and replacing the following fifteen little sketches on the charming stage on which I first saw them come to life.

Here in Upper Franconia, on the very spot where our race was born—imagine a deep valley shrouded in a park, where a Margrave of the last century cleared its deserted paths, and planted his vast forests which he peopled with divine statuary. Along the walks stone benches to tempt you curved like shells and as caressing as divans, and there too among the sunken lawns you see basins split by vegetation of artificial lakes and fountains that will never play again.

To-day the garden is abandoned to the deer. How often have I seen these pretty creatures appear within a few feet of me standing erect on their four frail hooves, their beautiful eyes shining with terror. But they feared no one, not even the great White Huntress, the arched grace of whose body stood upon a broken plinth.

For she had lost her bow and her slim fingers had long been broken. In the middle of the valley

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shone Bayreuth and the red glory of the theatre on the highest hill towards the west. Thence it was I started on my nightly pilgrimage to the temple, where I felt myself alone watching the dove alight and where overwhelming emotions enfolded me in ecstasy.

II

THE COURTESANS OF CORINTH

Courtesans of ancient times invariably evoke in the minds of the French public the atmosphere and setting of Alexandria—Alexandria was in truth a vast commercial city, three or four times larger than the city we know to-day. Courtesans swarmed there freely—far more so than in other cities, but they did not play a dominant part there, such as a few centuries earlier was played by their sisters of Corinth. Nothing in the modern world is comparable to the city that was Corinth. It was the city of women, much as Dawson City is to-day the city of gold or Creusot the city of steel. Love was the sole fruit of this country. All the Hellenic world flocked there with the sole intent of buying the pleasures of the flesh, and to placate the goddess who granted them to her faithful.

The traveller in this city of Aphrodite could take his choice from two classes of courtesans—the sacred and the profane—between whom there was as a rule no ill-feeling—as they considered themselves equally dear to the goddess. The profane courtesans pursued a profession authorised by law, and indeed subject to direct taxation, which is always the most conclusive proof of legal recognition. They paid for their

licences and in return the city protected them ; not only against lovers who beat them, but against those who cheated them. So highly protected were they that they could sue their night's companion and claim the price of their labours. We have not included this law in our modern codes as it would lay us open to all kinds of blackmail. But in Greece one had nothing of the kind to fear. The courtesan's trade was an accepted one, and a respectable man could have recourse to these pleasures without any subterfuge, provided he exceeded neither the transports of the bed nor those of the table—which were the only cases in which wise men would have censured him.

These women belonged to the most different classes, ranging from abject poverty to vast wealth, and from slavery to power.

III

LUCIAN

Lucian's youth was spent in modelling those delicate terra-cotta statuettes which the tombs of Greece have preserved for us and which, destined from their birth to deck a woman's room, charmed many departed eyes before giving us pleasure.

We know these little figureens—they have been lucky enough to please even those people who will never understand anything either of antiquity or sculpture. But we ought not to be angry with them for that. It happens that the public sometimes grows to like even pretty things, which it would be useless to discredit—were it not that it has them copied immediately by its favourite artists who at once proceed to make them intolerable to us. So when still a child Lucian worked the soft wax with his little thumb and a bone scalpel. He modelled cattle, horses and women. One day he was apprenticed to one of his uncles, who was himself a sculptor in marble; but marble was not a material Lucian could manipulate. The first block with which he was entrusted he smashed with a clumsy stroke of his chisel to atoms. Warned by this experience and by a cruel ox-tendon with which he was flogged, where you know, the poor

child renounced for ever the idea of shaping the Olympian gods in Parian marble.

This explains without any doubt why later he held them up to such scorn and ridicule. He resumed his modelling of young girls in clay with the red Syrian earth coloured by the blood of Adonis. For Lucian was born in Syria, like Meleager, like Philodemus, like so many others to whom an Asiatic origin, admitted or kept secret, has transmitted a gift of grace with that peculiar instinct which makes them see in everything a latent promise of voluptuousness.

We can reconstruct almost exactly the series of his figureens. The modellers of the second century dealt with varied subjects, whose number was, however, restricted. Lucian bent his ardour towards giving life to the feminine body beneath the stiff form of the cloak; he designed the nose-piece of a helmet or the handle of a fan; he placed the torso of a dreaming woman on a carved seat and then from each side pressed in little sticks of grey clay—which, carefully handled, gradually took on the shape of naked arms. The little girl playing with her knuckle-bones, one knee and one hand upon the ground; the old bent nurse amusing a child; the courtesan standing and waiting, one finger to her lips; the widow bearing a funeral urn; the slave beneath his load; two girls clasped in each other's arms; the philosopher poring over his book; the lady at her spinning-wheel came from his dexterous fingers.

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He also sold lucky statues of the gods which the Syrians placed in their houses and which insured that their lands would be fruitful ; or perhaps the Persian deity Anaitis, hideous and fat, wearing an enormous head-dress, or again slim Fortune raising her tunic to her navel so as to be able to run away, or give herself more swiftly. Perhaps he hollowed out of the hard stone the moulds for those pink lamps which illuminated with utmost simplicity " the sports which only the lamp doth see " and which were well adapted to illuminate the imagination of lovers.

Such little subjects were traditional. The world was growing old. Many centuries before, all that art can obtain from ideas or materials had already been discovered and artists resigned themselves to dealing only with those subjects in which invention played less part than personality. Lucian studied the earth and its occupants very closely ; for the rest, he made use of the efforts of those who had gone before him, and thus it was he learned to write.

*

* *

He was a prolific writer. Unknown to himself, he was creating for all time, for his works are amongst the very few that have come down to us without too many gaps. Whilst, for instance, we possess but seven of the seventy tragedies of Æschylus, we can read and enjoy eighty-two opuscula attributed to Lucian alone. This is indeed wealth.

The Christian monks who copied and preserved in their monasteries such a small proportion of Greek literature, saved Lucian from oblivion. We might be grateful to them, had they been actuated by a literary motive. But they had other ends in view. They were zealous to keep these books to the fore, not because of their beauty, but because of their impiety. In the same way that, of all the Greek comedians, the monks preferred Aristophanes for the familiarity, often very coarse, with which he treated the gods, so they liked to read Lucian because he heaped ridicule on Zeus. Before establishing a new religion they had to destroy the rival temples and extinguish the flame that burnt so brightly above Antioch. Clement of Alexandria, Lactantius and Arnobius brandished Deuteronomy over the head of the wretched Pasipha. To Satan they gave the outward form of the Satyrs. They fought Venus as though she were an enemy queen. And it was a strong argument for their cause to be able to choose one writer out of a thousand and to exclaim: "You see! Even they themselves scoff at the things we have overthrown!"

Not only have they banded down to us the unequal work of their accomplice, but they appear also to have attributed to him a certain number of pieces for which he was in no wise responsible. Philologists lay an unhesitating finger upon these wrongly-attributed works. Unfortunately, they do not all lay it upon the same works! Formerly, the authenticity of the Golden

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Ass was universally admitted ; ten years ago, unless one wanted to be insulted at the Sorbonne, one had to sign it " Lucius of Patraë " ; nowadays it is attributed to Lucian, who is said to have imitated it from Lucius . . . But let that be. These are merely college gymnastics, and have no literary interest.

Cyprian Masques, by a stroke of good fortune, have never ceased to be attributed to him. Dare I, nevertheless, express the opinion that they present certain very disquieting symptoms? We are told that they were written under the Antonines, but they show us an Athenian life very different from that of the second century of our era. Again, there are several points in common between the prose of these stories and the verse of the Middle Comedy ; and, even were this argument to fail, we are faced by the fact that they are conceived and composed, and limited on the model of certain recently-discovered masques of which we know, at any rate, that they were very much in fashion four or five hundred years before Lucian. Finally, they are little masterpieces of outstanding merit, and this probably precludes the idea that they could have been imagined by the author of the Ochypous.*

However that may be, Lucian may be considered, if not to have invented, at any rate to have adapted this

** This term was applied by the Greeks to short one-act sex comedies. For instance: The Women of Syracuse, by Theocritus. This is a literary form that has not varied for two thousand years. The Vie Parisienne publishes " masques " which are essentially Athenian.*

collection of incidents that were so much to his own taste and to that of his time. As a modeller, he did not always take the trouble to have living figureens to pose before him ; he brought fresh vision to bear upon what had already been dealt with, altered it according to his own fancy, and made a new object of it. As a writer, he did not consider that, in abandoning art for style, his imagination should be hampered by any personal scruples.

His book, his best one, this book, introduces us to thirty different characters, in fifteen scenes. They are all people of the same world, a mixed world, if you will, but, for all that, clearly enough defined for us to be justified in expecting a certain similarity between the elements composing it. And yet there is none. These men and women are types sketched in a few strokes, characters which have nothing in common with one another, voices that cease as soon as we have heard them, and the whole book gives us a finished picture, complete in fifteen episodes, of night life in Athens.

I know of no other instance in literature of such variety in so compact a space.

And the most amazing thing is that, after a lapse of some two thousand years, and in such a distant country, the reader can clearly recognise all the characters of these dialogues, even to the least important of them. Rosalind and Orgon still bear the stamp of the age that engendered them. But here nothing has aged : the women are the women of Forain, the men,

FOREWORD

the men of Gyp, and they have all spoken to us, if not in real life, at any rate from the pages of still recent books, those, indeed, which give us the most accurate pictures of people. In these pages Pauline Cardinal, Olympia, Madame Tellier, Satin, Jenny Cadine and Fanny Legrand return to us. I need hardly point out that to-day they have the same activities, the same joys and the same tears as long ago, but the parallel does not end there, and often leads us to the strangest similarities. . . . Modern novelists, who are influenced by antiquity and who claim to give their recitals "a really Greek character" might well go to Lucian for inspiration to give their next studies "a really French character."

So much care has this ancient author taken to eliminate, throughout his book, anything which was not for all time.

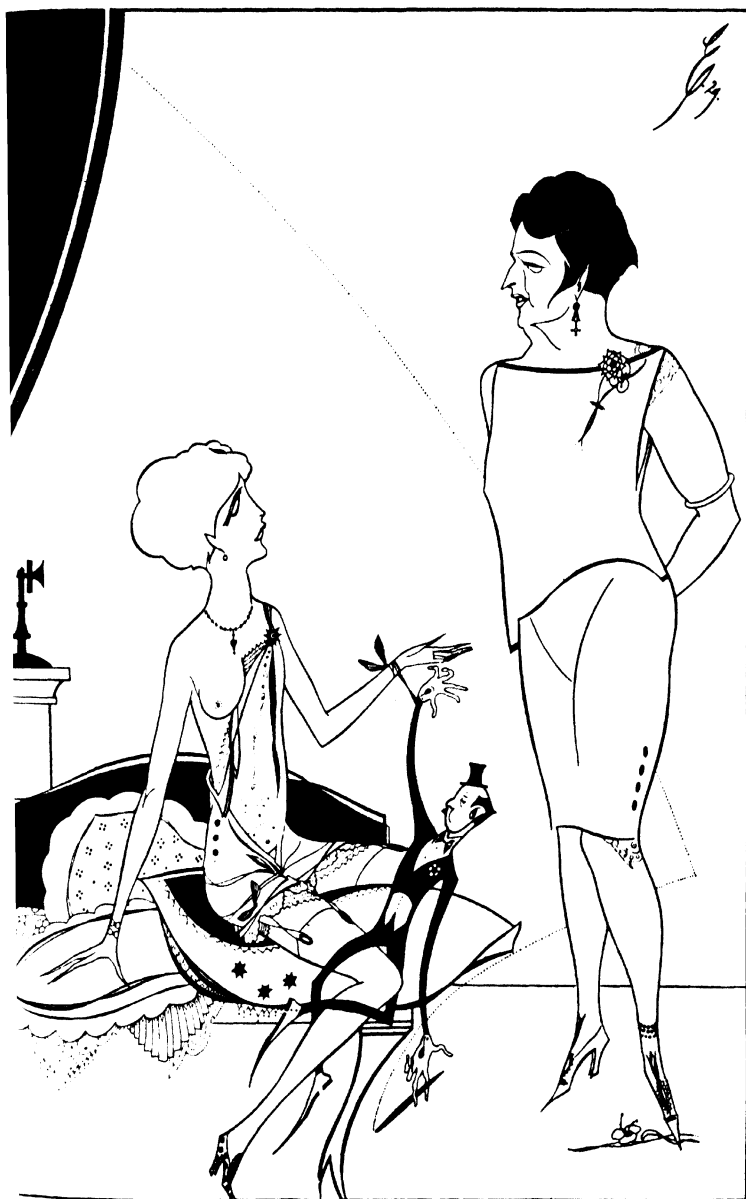
IV

LUCIAN AND OUR SLANG

Every time that I translated intimate dialogues from the Greek I was surprised and amused by the astonishing similarity that exists between the Greek and the French minds. Had I been more sure of myself, I would have written a treatise on the subject. The actual slang expressions of Aristophanes and Lucian survive in France to this day. For instance, the expression: "En voilà une, de chance!" is found word for word in Greek, even to the two useless genitives. One of Lucian's courtesans says that her lover is "à sec," meaning that he is ruined. It is as great a pleasure to translate Lucian as it is heart-rending to try to translate one of Keats's odes or a simple quatrain from Heine: One gets the impression that one is re-translating the words into the language of their origin.

P. L.

THE EDUCATION OF CORINNA



I (VI)
THE EDUCATION OF CORINNA

CORINNA, Little Girl.
CROBYLE, Her Mother.

THE EDUCATION OF CORINNA

CROBYLE

Well, Corinna, thou seest now, it is not so terrible to lose thy virginity. Thou hast been with a youth who has given thee as a first offering a hundred drachmas ; and with these I will at once buy thee a necklace.

CORINNA

O yes, little mother. Please see that it has shining stones like that of Philainis.

CROBYLE

It shall be exactly the same. Listen and I will tell thee what thou shalt do and how thou must conduct thyself with men. This is our sole means of livelihood, my daughter ; and since thy blessed father passed away two years ago, thou knowest not how we've existed. While he lived we lacked for nothing. As a smith he had acquired a great reputation in the Piræus. It is universally recognised that there will never be another smith to equal Philinos. After his death I sold his tongs, anvil and hammer for two hundred drachmas ; on that we have subsisted. To increase our resources I have woven and

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spun in order to earn our bare livelihood and I have brought thee up, O ! my daughter, the sole hope that remains to me.

CORINNA

Dost thou mean the hundred drachmas ?

CROBYLE

No ! No ! But I had thought that thou wert already old enough to support me, at the same time providing thyself without difficulty with the wherewithal to deck thy person, to grow rich, to dress in robes of purple, and be waited on by slaves.

CORINNA

But, mother, why sayest thou so—and how ?

CROBYLE

By living with young men, drinking in their company, and sleeping with them for money.

CORINNA

Like Daphnis' daughter, Lyra ?

CROBYLE

Yes.

CORINNA

But . . . she is a courtesan !

CROBYLE

There's nothing wrong in that. Thou wilt be richer than she, and thou wilt have many lovers.

THE EDUCATION OF CORINNA

CORINNA (*weeping*)

.

CROBYLE

Why weepest thou, Corinna? Hast thou not observed how numerous are the courtesans, how sought after are they, how much they earn? How well I remember Daphnis in rags (*Nemesis*, forgive me!) before she was old enough to give herself. Now seest thou what progress she has made with gold, with flowered dresses and four slaves?

CORINNA (*restored to cheerfulness*)

But how did she—Lyra—earn all this?

CROBYLE

Primarily, by dressing with elegance; secondly, by being aimable and amusing with the world in general; and thirdly, by never bursting into noisy meaningless laughter, like thou doest, but smiling subtly to attract and then treating shrewdly but fairly withal, those who visit her or take her to their houses, and never being the first to accost men. When paid to come to supper she never gets drunk, for that is ridiculous and men detest it, and she does not gorge herself with food like a sot; she only toys with the meats with the tips of her fingers, and silently; she does not stuff her cheeks with sweets; she drinks quietly, not with great gulps but with little sips.

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CORINNA

Even when she is thirsty, mother ?

CROBYLE

Above all when she is thirsty, Corinna ; she does not speak more than is necessary, she never makes fun of those present and has eyes only for him who pays her, and for these reasons she is loved by all. Then, when she goes to bed, she works without obscenity but carefully, and she seeks for one thing amongst all others, and that is to tame the man and make of him a lover. It is for that, that she is praised by all. If you grasp this lesson fully we too will be rich, because apart from that she is far from having your . . . (but nothing, O beloved Nemesis !) I have only one thing to add—may you live long !

CORINNA

Tell me, mother : All those who pay me, will they look like Eucritos, with whom I went to bed yesterday ?

CROBYLE

Not all. There will be better. Several may be very vigorous. Others may not be so handsome.

CORINNA

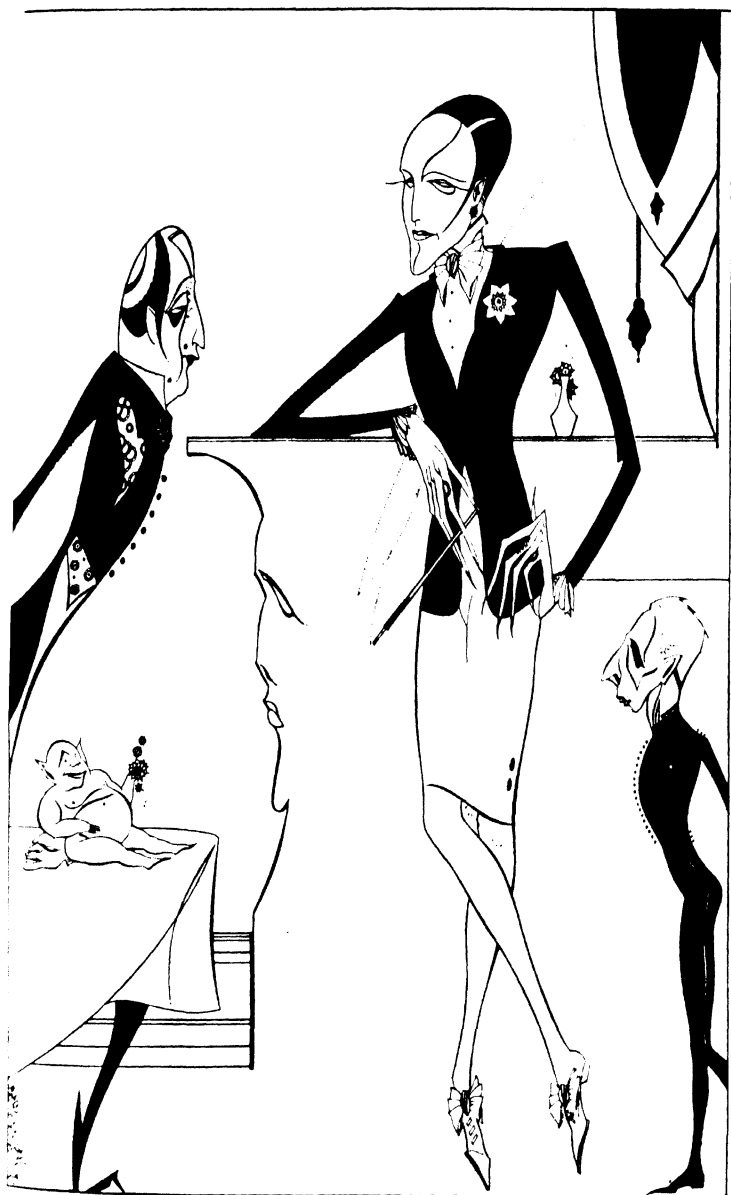
And must I sleep with these too ?

CROBYLE

Above all with these, my daughter ! They

pay the most. The handsome ones expect their beauty to be thy sole reward. Take great care to attach thyself to those who pay the best, if thou desirest that in a short while all women will point their fingers at thee, saying : “ Seest thou Corinna, daughter of Crobyle, how rich she is become, and thus has made her mother thrice happy ! ” What sayest thou ? Wilt thou do this ? I know thou wilt outshine them all with ease. Now go wash thyself : suppose little Eucritos should return to-day ! For he promised me he would.

MEGILLA



II (V)
THE LESBIANS

LEAINA, Player of the Cithar.

CLONARION, Young Girl.

The following little dialogue horrified all Greek scholars. Wieland never dared to translate it. Perrot D'Ablancourt suppresses a hundred details and supplies a certain padding. M. Talbot entirely changes its nature, half in decency, half in ingenuousness. Belin de Ballu, not wishing to be troubled or to leave a blank page in the middle of his translation, contents himself by simply reproducing D'Ablancourt's fantasy, but he is careful to add as a note : "It is as well to warn readers that not one word of this exists in the original." (T. iv. p. 392.)

THE LESBIANS

CLONARION*

What is this we hear about thee, Leaina ; the rich Lesbian Megilla is in love with thee like a man, and you unite one with another, just how I know not ?

LEAINA†

. . . .

CLONARION

What ails thee ? Thou blushest. Confess then, 'tis true ?

LEAINA

It is true, O Clonarion. I am ashamed thereat. It is so strange. . . .

CLONARION

But, by Aphrodite, what do ye ? What does the woman want from thee ? What doest thou when you make love together ?

LEAINA

. . . .

CLONARION

Dost thou hear me ?

LEAINA

. . . .

* " Young Shoot."

† " Lioness."

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CLONARION

Ah! thou dost not love me, else thou
wouldst not hide such things from me!

LEAINA

I love thee more than any other woman!
But she is so tremendously male.

CLONARION

I do not understand what thou sayest. . . .
Unless . . . she be one of these viragos they
tell of in Lesbos, one of these virile women who
cannot suffer men, but enjoy women even as
though they themselves were men?

LEAINA

It is something like that.

CLONARION (*entranced*)

O! Leaina! Tell me all! How first she
tried to seduce thee, how didst thou let thyself
be persuaded, and all about it!

LEAINA

They had arranged a supper, she and Demon-
assa the Corinthian, who is also rich and has the
same tastes as Megilla. They bade me come to
play the lute, and when I finished playing, and
when the evening came, and when it was time
to sleep after much drinking:

“Come now, Leaina,” said Megilla, “it is

THE LESBIANS

time to go to bed. Sleep here with us, between us two."

CLONARION

Thou wentest to bed ?

LEAINA

. . . .

CLONARION

And later ? What happened then ?

LEAINA

They kissed me first of all as men do, not only by applying their lips, but with their mouths slightly open ; and they hugged me in their arms and pressed my breasts. Demonassa even bit me as she kissed me. For my part I understood but little of what was going on. Suddenly Megilla, who declared herself to be warm, removed her wig—which was a perfect imitation and fitted beautifully—and appeared shaved to the skin like the most male of athletes ; I was overcome on seeing this. But she :

" O Leaina," said she, " hast thou ever seen a young man as handsome as I ? "

" But," I replied, " I see no young man here, Megilla ! "

" Do not render me effeminate, for I am called Megillos and I married this Demonassa some time ago and she is my wife."

I began to laugh, Clonarion, and on hearing this I said :

“ Therefore, O Megillos, you were a man without our knowledge, just as Achilles when he remained hidden among the maidens disguised in his purple robes ? And hast thou a man’s power ? And thou doest to Demonassa all that men do ? ”

“ That,” said she, “ O Leaina, do I not, but nearly that. . . . Thou wilt see me unite myself in quite a special fashion which is even more voluptuous.”

“ Then art thou not an Hermaphrodite,” said I, “ of whom it is said that many possess the two means ? ”

For I knew not even yet, O Clonarion, what it all could mean.

“ No,” said she, “ I am a man completely.”

“ I have heard tell,” I continued, “ from the Boëtian flute-player Ismenodora, of this Theban woman, who became a man through the offices of an excellent magician called Teiresias. . . . Has not a similar fate befallen thee ? ”

“ No, Leaina,” said she. “ I came into the world like you other women ; but I have the tastes, the desires and all the rest of a man.”

“ And do the desires suffice thee ? ” said I.

“ Leave thyself to me, Leaina, if thou believest me not,” she said, “ and thou wilt realise that

THE LESBIANS

I have nothing to envy men. . . . I have something that resembles virility. . . . Come, leave yourself to me and you will soon see ! ”

Clonarion, I left myself to her, so great was her supplication ! Besides she gave me a splendid necklace with the finest linen tunics. Then I embraced her in my arms like a man. . . . She kissed me and behaved as one breathless and apparently inundated with rapture. . . .

CLONARION

But how did she behave ? In what manner ? Tell me that specially, Leaina.

LEAINA

Ask me no details. These are shameful things. I swear by the Goddess of the Sky I will not tell them to thee.

III (VIII)
THE PLEASURE OF BEING BEATEN

CHRYISIS, Aged seventeen }
AMPELIS, Aged thirty-five } Courtesans.

THE PLEASURE OF BEING BEATEN

AMPELIS†

Chrysis, he who is not jealous, who flies not into tempers, who has not assailed his mistress with blows, who has not torn out her hair, nor wrenched off her garments—he—is not yet in love.

CHRYSIS*

Are these the only proofs that love can give, Ampelis ?

AMPELIS

No. Those are only the acts of a hot-blooded man. Beyond this, kisses, tears, avowals, visits, these are no more but the threshold of love. All the fires of passion arise from jealousy. If, therefore, as thou sayest, Giorgias has beaten thee, if he is jealous, thou hast great grounds for hope and pray he may continue.

CHRYSIS

What sayest thou—that he may continue to beat me ?

† “Young Vine.”

* “Golden Jewel.”

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AMPELIS

No. But that he may continue to be enraged if thou seest others save he. If he does not love thee, why should he be wrath at thy taking another lover ?

CHRYISIS

But I have no others. He imagines I love this millionaire because I mentioned him to him a few days since.

AMPELIS

It is a good thing he should think thee sought after by the wealthy. He will try the more to outdo his rivals in order not to be left behind.

CHRYISIS

For the moment he cries and beats me and gives me nothing.

AMPELIS

He will be generous. Jealous people fly into a rage on the slightest provocation.

CHRYISIS

But I cannot understand why thou shouldst desire me to receive blows, my dear !

AMPELIS

I do not say that ; but I do know that men become great lovers when they imagine one is indifferent to them ; and when a lover imagines himself the sole love, desire perishes within him.

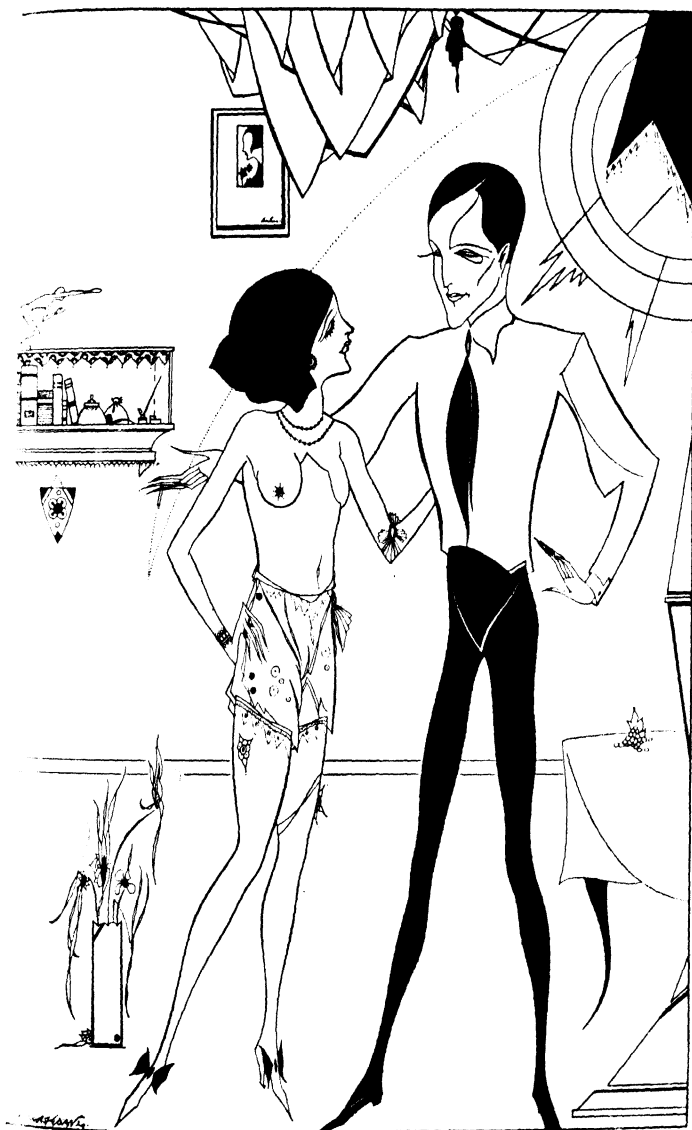
I talk thus to thee as one who has practised

the profession for twenty years, and thou art but eighteen—I think ; perchance less. If thou desirest, I will tell thee all I suffered not many years ago.

I had as a lover Demophantos, the usurer, who lives near the Poikile. He never gave me more than five drachmas, and presumed to be the master. He loved me, Chrysis, with a shallow love, he never sighed, he never wept, he never remained all night before my door ; he slept with me occasionally, but always at greater intervals. One day that he came to visit me I did not open my door, for the painter Callides was with me, who had sent me ten drachmas. Demophantos went away cursing me. Several days passed before I sent for him : Callides was again with me. Demophantos, who was already very heated, burst infuriated by this through the open door, wept, beat me, threatened to kill me, tore my tunic, did everything, and finally gave me six thousand drachmas, in return for which he had me to himself for eight whole months ! His wife told everyone I had driven him mad with poisons. The poison was jealousy.

That is why, Chrysis, I advise you to make use of the same poison with Georgias. That boy will be rich the day something happens to his father.

THE TRUE LOVE



IV (VII)
THE TRUE LOVE

MOUSARION, Eighteen years old, a Courtesan.
HER MOTHER.

THE TRUE LOVE

THE MOTHER

If we ever find another lover like Chaireas, Mousarion, we must sacrifice a white goat to Aphrodite of the people, and to her heavenly self a heifer, and we will crown Demeter who gives wealth, for we shall be happy and thrice times happy.

Thou seest now how much we receive from this young man : Till now he has not presented thee with so much as a penny, nor a dress, nor a pair of shoes, nor a box of perfumes, nothing but excuses and promises and high hopes. All he says is : “ If my father . . . and when I come into my own—all shall be for thee.” And thou sayest he has sworn to wed thee by law ?

MOUSARION*

He swore it, mother, by the two goddesses and by Athene of the city.

THE MOTHER

And thou believest that ? And yet the other day he had not enough to pay what he owed,

* “ Little Muse ”

and thou gavest him thy ring without mention to me ! He sold it to buy drink, followed later by thy two Ionic necklaces, both of which weighed two darikes,* and which the armourer Paxiteles of Chios had made for thee at Ephesus. It was essential that he should pay his debts to his friends. I do not speak of thy linen—of thy chemises. Indeed we have made a find. How lucky are we to have met him !

MOUSARION

But he is beautiful, he has no beard, he tells me he loves me, and begins to weep ; and then he is the son of Dimonaches and of Laches the Areopagite ; he has told us he will marry me and gives us great hopes once his sire has closed his eyes.

THE MOTHER (*ironical*)

Very well, Mousarion, when we need shoes, and when the shoemaker demands two florins, we will tell him : “ We have no money ; please accept on our behalf . . . a few hopes ! ” And when the flour merchant presents his bill : “ Wait,” we shall say, “ till the death of Laches Collyteus ; we will pay thee after the wedding.” Dost thou not blush to be the only courtesan without ear-rings, necklace or Tarantine tunic ?

* 87 grains.

THE TRUE LOVE

MOUSARION

Why should I blush, mother? Are they happier or more beautiful than I?

THE MOTHER

No! But they are more intelligent. They have studied their arts as courtesans. They put no trust in youths who are so ready with their vows. Thou art faithful, thou lovest Chaireas as a husband, thou art faithful to him, and the other day when that Archerian peasant brought thee two hundred drachmas, the price of the wine his father had sent him to sell—he also was clean shaven—but yet thou didst mock him and didst sleep with Chaireas the Adonis.

MOUSARION

What! You propose I should desert Chaireas then, in order to receive a peasant who smells of goat? Chaireas has a skin like a sucking-pig of Acharnae.*

THE MOTHER

So be it. He was an evil-smelling rustic, but why didst thou not receive Antiphon, the son of Menecrates, who offered thee a hundred drachmas! Was he not a beautiful man of the world, and of the same age as Chaireas?

* Chief suburb of the outskirts of Athens.

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MOUSARION

But Chaireas has sworn to cut both our throats should he ever discover us together.

THE MOTHER

How many others have threatened that? In consequence thou wilt remain without lovers, thou wilt become an honest woman, thou wilt no longer be a courtesan but a priestess of Thesmophore? . . . Enough of this; to-day is the Feast of Demeter. What hath he given thee for this feast?

MOUSARION

He has nothing belonging to him, little mother.

THE MOTHER

He is the only one who can get nothing out of his father by sending him a lying slave, or from his mother by threats, and, if these fail, by enlisting in the marine infantry. He stays inactive with us, he bores us, and not only does he not give us anything, but he will not allow us to receive aught from those who give. And dost thou think, Mousarion, that thou wilt always be eighteen, that Chaireas will always have the same feelings for thee when he becomes rich and his mother has found him a wealthy wife? Will he remember tears, kisses and

THE TRUE LOVE

promises in preference to a dowry of five talents, thinkest thou ?

MOUSARION

He will remember without doubt. The proof being that he has never married. They besought him, they almost forced him, but he refused.

THE MOTHER

Pray Heaven, he may not have lied. But I shall remind thee, Mousarion, of what I have just told thee.

V (III)
MATERNAL COUNSELS

PHILINNA, Courtesan.
HER MOTHER.

MATERNAL COUNSELS

HER MOTHER

Thou wert mad, Philinna, yesterday. What ailed thee at supper ?

Diphilos came to see me this morning in tears, and he explained to me all he had suffered at thy hands. Thou becamest inebriated, and rose from the table to dance after he had forbidden thee ; and after that thou gavest a kiss to his friend Lamprias : and when he became wrath, thou leftest him and satest close to Lamprias. Thou tookest him in thy arms while Diphilos looked on suffocated with rage. And that night thou didst not sleep with him ; thou leftest him weeping and thou layest stretched out all alone upon a neighbouring bed, singing—to make him unhappy.

PHILINNA* (*furious*)

But what he did to me, mother, he failed to tell thee, else thou wouldst not take sides against me with this insolent hound !

He left me to go and chat with Thaïs, the mistress of Lamprias, who was not yet come.

* “ Beloved.”

Seeing this distressed me and that I was making him signs, he seized Thaïs by the end of her ear, and bending her neck back he gave her so deep a kiss that she was unable to detach her lips ! I was weeping, but he began to laugh and to whisper all sorts of things in Thaïs' ear, against me without doubt, for Thaïs smiled while gazing at me. When they heard Lamprias enter and they were weary of kissing each other I retired to bed with Diphilos, so that he might have no further excuse. Then Thaïs rose and lifted her garments, showing her naked legs as though she were the sole possessor of beautiful limbs. When she ceased, Lamprias was silent, but Diphilos praised her rhythm and her dancing to excess, remarking how beautifully her foot followed the cithara ! and how exquisite were her legs ! One might have thought he was speaking of Sosandra of Kalamis, and not of that Thaïs, whom thou knowest as well as I—since she frequents the same baths as we do. Then Thaïs started to mock me : “ If,” said she, “ someone was not ashamed of having thin legs—she, too, would get up and dance.” What shall I say, mother ? I rose and danced. What should I have done ? Should I have endured her ridicule until she believed it true and allowed Thaïs to rule over the feast ?

MATERNAL COUNSELS

THE MOTHER

Thou art too impetuous, my daughter. Thou shouldst not have taken all this so much to heart. Tell me what happened later ?

PHILINNA

They all congratulated me. Diphilos alone lay on his back and stared at the ceiling—just at the moment I ceased from fatigue.

THE MOTHER

Anyway, is it true thou gavest kisses to Lamprias and that thou leftest thy bed to take him in thine arms ? . . . Thou art silent ? . . . In any case it is unpardonable !

PHILINNA

I wished to return him unhappiness for unhappiness.

THE MOTHER

Thus it was not with him thou slepst ? And thou sangest whilst he wept ? You do not apparently seem to realise our poverty, my daughter ! You do not appear to remember all we have received from him, and how we should have passed last winter if Aphrodite had not sent him to us !

PHILINNA

And just for that thou expectest me to endure his insults ?

CYPRIAN MASQUES

THE MOTHER

Storm if thou must, but do not scoff. Knowest thou not that lovers cease from loving when they are mocked at, and when they know themselves to be wrong. Thou hast always been too susceptible for this man. Be careful lest the string breaks from overstretching.

VI (XIII)
UNNECESSARY LIES

LEONTICHOS, Trumpeter.
CHENIDAS, His Compère.
HYMNIS, Youthful Courtesan.
GRAMMIS, Her Slave.

UNNECESSARY LIES

LEONTICHOS (*with emphasis*)

And during the combat against the Galatians tell them, O Chenidas, how I rode in advance of the other cavaliers, mounted on my white steed, and how the Galatians, notwithstanding their valour, trembled at the sight of me, so much so that none resisted me. Then I, flinging my javelin, transpierced the cavalry leader and his horse ; and against the remainder who had got themselves together once again—for many after breaking the phalanx had once more re-formed into a square—against them I courageously drew my sword, and the force of my horse's impact overturned the first seven men ; with one blow of my sword I clove the chief's head in twain ; and then thy men arrived, O Chenidas, when all were already in flight.

CHENIDAS

And when thou wert in Paphlagonia, O Leontichos, when thou foughtest Satrap single-handed, didst thou not again accomplish great deeds ?

CYPRIAN MASQUES

LEONTICHOS

Thou doest well to remind me of that amazing combat. That Satrap was gigantic; he was said to be an astounding swordsman; he held the Greeks in scorn. He advanced between the two armies crying: "Who would care to fight me single-handed?" All were seized with terror—the company commanders, the battalion commanders and even our divisional commander, who was by no means a coward: for we were under the command of Aristachomos the Aetolian, and he is an expert at throwing the javelin. I was only in command of a thousand. In a moment of audacity—pushing my friends to one side, for they were holding me in their arms, in terror at the sight of this colossal barbarian in his sparkling golden armour, with his terrifying helmet, brandishing his javelin.

CHENIDAS

I also feared for thee, O Leontichos. Thou knowest how I held thee back, imploring thee for our sakes to refrain from braving this danger. Life would have become impossible to me hadst thou perished.

LEONTICHOS

But I, still driven by my audacity, advanced towards the middle no less well armed than the

UNNECESSARY LIES

Paphlagonian, clad in gold even as he, when a cry went up from our men, and from the barbarians who recognised me above all by my breastplate, my ornaments and my plumed helmet. Tell them, O Chenidas, to whom they compared me !

CHENIDAS

To whom else—by Zeus—save to Achilles, son of Thetis and Peleas ! How well thy helmet became thee ; how dazzling thy purple and thy luminous breastplate !

LEONTICHOS

When we met, the barbarian wounded me the first (correcting himself hastily) and inflicted a slight scratch a little below the knee. With one blow I transpierced his breastplate and struck him full in the chest ; and then, felling him to the ground, I severed his head easily with my lance, dripping with blood.

HYMNIS (*disgusted*)

Go on with thee, Leontichos ! How odious and disgusting a tale ! Who could look on you and still congratulate you over this blood-stained mud ! Who could drink or sleep with you ! I am off anyhow.

LEONTICHOS (*bolding her*)

I will pay you your price doubled.

CYPRIAN MASQUES

HYMNIS

I could not sleep with an assassin.

LEONTICHOS

Have no fear, Hymnis. All that occurred amongst the Paphlagonians. Now I am at peace.

HYMNIS

No, you are a horrible man. The blood dripped over you from the barbarian's head you were carrying on your lance. And after that am I to take such a man in my arms and give him kisses? No, I will not do that, By the Graces! That fellow is no better than the executioner.

LEONTICHOS

If you could only see me in arms I am sure that you would love me.

HYMNIS

Only to listen to you, Leontichos—my heart mounts and my hair crisps. I seem to see the shadows, the phantoms of your victims, and above all of that unhappy chief whose head you split in two. What would have been my state, had I seen the deed itself and the blood and the stretched corpses? I believe I should have died of it—I who have never seen the killing of a chicken.

LEONTICHOS

What a coward you are, Hymnis. What a

UNNECESSARY LIES

small spirit. I thought to please you by reciting all that to you.

HYMNIS

Tell such stories to the Lemniads and Danaids if you can find them. Myself, I am returning to my mother until it is day. Grammis, follow me. Health to you, brave officer, and kill all you wish. (Departs.)

LEONTICHOS

Stay, Hymnis, stay ! . . . She is gone !

CHENIDAS

It's you, Leontichos, who have terrified this child with your plumes and your tall unbelievable deeds. I saw her become quite yellow when you began the story of the captain. Then she changed features and trembled when you said you had cut off the head.

LEONTICHOS

I thought that would make me seem more lovable to her. But it is you who have lost me, Chenidas, by throwing me the idea of this duel.

CHENIDAS

Was it not necessary to help you to lie, seeing the reason for this rigmarole. It's you who made it much more horrible. You could cut off the unlucky Paphlagonian's head, but why

spike it on the tip of your lance and cover yourself with blood ?

LEONTICHOS

True that it is disgusting, Chenidas. But the rest was not ill-imagined. Go and persuade her to sleep with me.

CHENIDAS

Then shall I tell her that you invented everything to appear brave in her eyes ?

LEONTICHOS

It's shameful, Chenidas.

CHENIDAS

Otherwise she will not return. Choose then one of two things, either to be hated and to be thought a hero, or to sleep with Hymnis after confessing yourself a liar.

LEONTICHOS (*very embarrassed*)

Both are painful. But I take Hymnis. Go, Chenidas, and tell her that I have lied—but not in everything !

VII (XV)
THE FLUTE PLAYER

PARTHENIS, a Flute Player.

COCHLIS, a Courtesan.

THE FLUTE PLAYER

COCHLIS*

Why are you crying, Parthenis, and whence come you with your broken flutes?

PARTHENIS† (*sobbing*)

The soldier . . . the Aetolian . . . the big fellow . . . Crocale's lover . . . has beaten me because he found me flute-playing at Crocale's, paid by his rival Gorgos. And he broke my flutes. He overthrew the table where they were supping. He hurled himself on the pitcher and emptied it. And he seized the peasant Gorgos by the hair and dragged him out of the room. And there and then the soldier, whose name is Deinomachus I think, and one of his comrades surrounded him and beat him so savagely that I doubt if he will recover, Cochlis. A great deal of blood poured from his nostrils. His face is swollen and covered with bruises.

COCHLIS

Was this man mad or drunk? And is it a drunkard's tale?

* "Purple Shell."

† "Little Virgin."

CYPRIAN MASQUES

PARTHENIS

Cochlis, it's jealousy and disordered love. Crocale, I think, asked him for twelve thousand florins, if he wanted to have her to himself. Deinomachus refused, and so she refused him leave to return. She closed the door when he appeared. She received Gorgos of Oinoe, a rich farmer, who has loved her a long time. She has drunk with him and sent me to play the flute to them. The supper went very well. I was playing some Lydian air. The toiler rose to dance and Crocale was clapping her hands. All was cheery when a noise, a cry was heard, and the entrance door was forced. Eight young men immediately hurled themselves in, with the Megarian among them. Quickly they threw everything over, and, as I told you, Gorgos was broken with blows, thrown to the ground and trampled under foot. Crocale, I know not how, escaped to his neighbour Thespias. Deinomachus slapped me and called me filth and cast me out with broken flutes. Now I'm off to tell my employer everything. The farmer is off to find friends in town to give the Megarian over to justice.

COCHLIS

That's what one gets from these love affairs with soldiers—blows and lawsuits. They are

THE FLUTE PLAYER

all majors or colonels by what they say, but when payment has to be made—"Wait for the bill," they say, "when I receive my pay I will pay all."

THE NIGHT



VIII (XI)
THE NIGHT

TRYPHAINA, a Courtesan.
CHARMIDES, a Lover.

THE NIGHT

TRYPHAINA*

When one takes a courtesan and pays her five florins and sleeps with her—is that a time to turn your back and weep and groan? And you had no pleasure in drinking, and you were the only one to refuse to eat anything. You wept during the whole of dinner. I saw you well. And now you do not stop sobbing like a child. Why all that, Charmides? Conceal nothing from me and let me keep that at least from this night that I shall have spent near you without sleeping.

CHARMIDES

Love is killing me, Tryphaina. He is too terrible for me to resist.

TRYPHAINA

It's clear, then, that you do not love me. I am there and you take no notice of me. You repel me when I wish to take you into my arms and you place your clothes like a rampart between us for fear that I touch you. Then tell me who is this woman? Perhaps I might

* "Delicate."

CYPRIAN MASQUES

help you in your love. Those are services I know how to pay.

CHARMIDES

You know her and surely she knows you well. She is no obscure harlot.

TRYPHAINA

Tell me her name, Charmides.

CHARMIDES

Her name, Tryphaina, is Philemation.*

TRYPHAINA

Which? for there are two. Is it she of the Piraeus, who was recently deflowered, the mistress of Damyllus, or is it the other whom they call Pagis†?

CHARMIDES

That's the one. That's the evil genius that seized me and I was captured by her.

TRYPHAINA

Then it is she whom you weep?

CHARMIDES

And no slight weeping.

TRYPHAINA

Have you loved her long or is this a fresh affair?

* "Little Kiss"

† "The Net."

THE NIGHT

CHARMIDES

No. It is seven months, at the feast of Dionysius, since I saw her for the first time.

TRYPHAINA

But did you see her whole body, or only her face and as much as a woman shows at the age of forty-five?

CHARMIDES

She swears she will be twenty-two in the coming month of Elaphebolion.

TRYPHAINA

But where lies your trust? In her oaths or in your eyes? Look her over then. Peer at her temples, the only place she still has hair. The rest is a thick wig, and round her temples, when her paint is wiped out, you will see all is white underneath. But that is nothing. Force her to show herself naked one day.

CHARMIDES

That favour she has never allowed me yet.

TRYPHAINA

Naturally. She guesses that you would be disgusted at the sight of her white spots. From the neck to the ankles she has a skin like a panther. And you cry because you cannot sleep with such a woman? Perhaps she has even crossed and scorned you?

CYPRIAN MASQUES

CHARMIDES

Yes, Tryphaina, and yet she has received so much from me ! Yesterday she asked me for a thousand florins. My father is so avaricious that I could not easily give her the sum. Accordingly she received Moschion and shut the door on me. I too wanted to wound her and so I had you seized.

TRYPHAINA

By Venus, I would not have come if I had been told that you had taken me in order to hurt some one else—and above all to hurt that coffin of Philemation. But I am off. The cock has already crowed thrice.

CHARMIDES

Not so fast, Tryphaina. If what you say about Philemation is true, her wig and paint and spots, I could not bear to see her any more. . . .

TRYPHAINA

Ask your mother if she ever bathed with her. As for her years, your grandfather will tell you, if he is still alive !

CHARMIDES

Since this is her case, lift off this rampart strait. Let us entangle and kiss and couple with each other immediately. I bid a fine good-bye to Philemation !

IX (XIV)
THE RECAPITULATION

MYRTALE, Courtesan.
DORION, Sailor.
LYDE, Slave of Myrtale.

THE RECAPITULATION

DORION

Now you forbid my coming, Myrtale, since I have become poor for your sake. When I made you beautiful presents I was your well-beloved, your man, your master. I was everything for you. But since I have been completely cleaned out and you have made your Bithynian merchant your lover, you forbid my coming and I remain standing in front of your door and weeping while he has all your kisses and stays alone with you and spends the night there. And you say you are with child by him.

MYRTALE

Dorion, all that chokes me, and all the more when you say that you have given me so much and become poor for my sake. Count a little from the beginning all the presents that you have given me.

DORION

Very well, Myrtale, let us count. First of all some slippers from Sicyon for two florins. Put down two florins.

CYPRIAN MASQUES

MYRTALE

But you slept two nights with me.

DORION

And when I returned from Syria there was an alabaster full of Phœnician perfumes. That makes two more florins, by Poseidon !

MYRTALE

And I gave you, after you left, that little tunic to the hips for you to wear rowing, which the Epiourean forgot in my house one day after sleeping with me !

DORION

The Epiourean took it back when he recognised it on me at Samos, and after a long fight, O ye gods ! I gave you onions from Cyprus, five beetles and four perch when I returned from the Bosphorus. What more ? Eight sea-loaves in a net, a jar of figs from Caria, and lastly, gold-broidered sandals from Patares—you ungrateful one ! And I recall as well a huge cheese from Gythion !

MYRTALE (*with scorn*)

Five florins perhaps, Dorion, for all that.

DORION (*sadly*)

Oh, Myrtale, that is all that a sailor could bring you with his pay for a trip. I am in charge now of the right-hand side of a ship,

THE RECAPITULATION

but you look me over from head to foot. And lately at the feast of Venus haven't I dropped a florin before the two feet of Venus for your intention? And in addition I gave your mother two florins to buy shoes. And often I place two and sometimes four pence in this Lydian's hand. All taken together cover a sailor's fortune.

MYRTALE

The onions and the fish, Dorion?

DORION

Why, yes! I had nothing more to give you. I wouldn't be an oarsman if I were rich. I never brought my mother as much as a head of garlic. But I would very much like to know what you received in presents from the Bithynian.

MYRTALE

First of all . . . do you see this dress? He bought it for me and this big necklace as well.

DORION

That one? But I've known it on you for a long time.

MYRTALE

The one you saw on me was smaller and lacked emeralds. And these ear-rings and this carpet as well, and finally two hundred florins, and he pays our rent. That's no Patarian sandals or Gythion cheese or rubbish.

CYPRIAN MASQUES

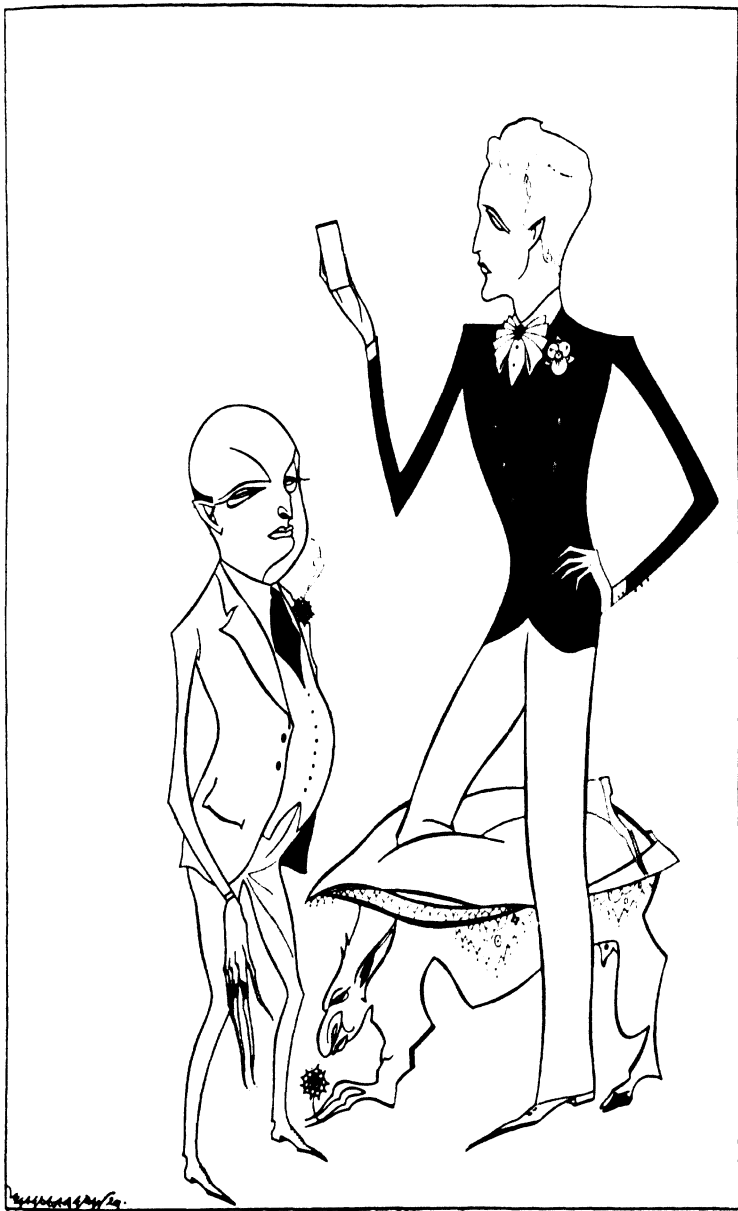
DORION

But you don't mention what he is like—this man you sleep with. He is more than fifty. His brow is bald and he is red as a lobster. You haven't seen his teeth? Pollux and Castor! what gracefulness when he sings and plays the young man. A donkey playing the harp, as they say. Sport with him! You are worthy of him and may he beget a child on you like its father. As for me, I can well find some Delphis or Cymbalion in my station, or your neighbour the flute player, or it matters not who. We don't all of us have carpets and necklaces and presents of two hundred florins.

MYRTALE (*ironically*)

Happy the woman who takes you for a lover, Dorion. For you will bring her onions from Cyprus and cheese when you return from Gythion!

CLINIAS AND THE PHILOSOPHER



X
THE PHILOSOPHER

DROSIS
CHELIDONION } Courtesans.

THE PHILOSOPHER

CHELIDONION*

So the little Clinias no longer comes to see you, Drosis. I haven't seen him at your house for a long while.

DROSIS†

No, Chelidonion. His master has shut him up to prevent him coming near me.

CHELIDONION

What sort of a man is he? Do you mean to speak of Diotimos the gymnasium master? He is my friend.

DROSIS

No, it's the most debauched of all the philosophers—Aristainetos.

CHELIDONION

That dismal man, thick-skinned and bearded, who walks as a habit with the little young folk in the Poikile ‡?

DROSIS

Yes, he's a bad hypocrite. I should like to

* "Swallow."

† "Dew."

‡ A portico and picture gallery.

CYPRIAN MASQUES

give him up to execution for the hangman to drag him by the beard.

CHELIDONION

How was he able to seduce Clinias ?

DROSIS

Chelidonion, I know not. But this little boy, who has not slept away from me since he learnt what a woman is—and it is I who taught him—has not come to my street for three days. I have become anxious, I don't know why. I have had presentiments and I sent Nebris* to see if he was at the Agora or in the Poikile. She told me that she saw him walking with Aristainetos, that she made a signal to him with her head from afar, but that he blushed with lowered eyes, and looked towards her no more. Then they entered the town. She followed them as far as the Dipylon,† but as he did not return she has come back without being able to say anything for certain. You can imagine the state I have been in since, not knowing what has been done with my little one. And I said to myself: “Nevertheless, I did him no harm. Was he loved by another to hate me so ? Is it his father who prevents him

* A slave.

† A gate between the town quarter of the courtesans and its suburb.

THE PHILOSOPHER

coming ? ” I turned all this over in my mind. And in the evening Dromon* came to bring me this letter from him. Take and read it, Chelidonion. You can read, can't you ?

CHELIDONION

Let me see. Give it me. The writing is not very good. Obviously he wrote to you in a hurry. He says, “ How I loved you, my Drosis, I call the Gods to witness ! ”

DROSIS (*pitying*)

Alas, the wretch ! He has not even the time to write a greeting.

CHELIDONION (*continuing*)

“ And now it is not hate but necessity that divides us. My father entrusted me to Aris tainetos to study philosophy, and my master, when he learnt all about us two, scolded me considerably and said that it was not proper for a son of Architeles and Erasicleia to live with a courtesan, for it is far better to prefer virtue to pleasure.”

DROSIS

He can go to blazes ! The idiot, to teach such stuff to a young man.

CHELIDONION

“ . . . So that I am absolutely forced to obey

* Slave of Clinias.

CYPRIAN MASQUES

him. He follows me and guards me carefully, and lets me see nobody but himself. If I learn wisdom and obey him in everything, he promises me that I shall become happy and virtuous with few efforts. I have had the greatest difficulty in writing you this from hiding. Be happy and remember CLINIAS."

DROSIS

What do you think of this letter, Chelidonium?

CHELIDONION

They are the words of a Scythian. Still the words, "remember Clinias," still leave a little hope.

DROSIS

That's what I think too, but I am dying of love. Dromon has told me that this Aristainetos loves young men, and that under pretence of the sciences he lives with the fairest boys, that he has already had strange relations with Clinias and has promised to make him like unto the gods. He even reads with him the amorous dialogues of the old philosophers with their disciples, and he is ever round him. But Dromon has threatened him that he will warn the father of Clinias.

CHELIDONION

We must treat Dromon, Drosis.

THE PHILOSOPHER

DROSIS

I have, but he does not need that to be on my side. Nebris tickles him.

CHELIDONION

Assure yourself. All will be well. My advice is to put an inscription on the wall of the Ceramicæ, on the side where Architeles usually walks.

DROSIS

But how can you do that without being seen ?

CHELIDONION

During the night, Drosis, with a charcoal picked up somewhere.

DROSIS

Excellent. Fight with me, Chelidonion, against this pedant of an Aristainetos.

XI (XII)
CONTEMPT

JOESSA, Courtesan.
PYTHIAS, Her Mistress.
LYSIAS, Her Lover.

CONTEMPT

JOESSA

So, Lysias, you make me entreat you? Excellent. Never did I ask you for money. Never left I you at the door saying: "Another is there." Never did I make you abuse your father, or steal something from your mother, to make me presents like the other courtesans. For from the beginning I took you without payment. You know what fine lovers I have sent away. Etocles to-day, a magistrate, and Pasion the armour-maker, and your comrade Melissus, whose father is dead, which gives him his whole fortune. You alone were ever my Phaon. I looked at none but thee. Thee alone I allowed into my room. I was mad enough to believe in all that you swore, and on that account I kept as good for you as a Penelope, although my mother cried and complained to my friends. But ever since you know that you have me in the palm of your hand, and that I waste with love for you, you play with Lycaine* before my eyes to cause me anguish, or else you praise

* "She-wolf."

Magidion,* the flute-player, to me when we are lying together. All this makes me cry and feel outraged. . . .

The other day you were drinking with Thrason and Diphilos. Cymbalion,† the flute-player, was there too and Pyrallis,‡ who is my enemy. You gave Cymbalion five kisses, and I felt no anxiety. You only insulted yourself in embracing this woman. But how many signs you made to Pyrallis ! And in drinking you gave her the cup, and in returning it to the little slave you whispered her to pour to no one without orders from Pyrallis. Finally, you bit into an apple and after having looked to see that Diphilos was otherwise occupied in talking to Thrason, you bent yourself over and very cleverly passed the apple between the thighs of Pyrallis without trying to hide yourself from me. She kissed it and slipped it between her breasts under their bands. . . .

Why must you act so ? Have I ever done you an injury, small or great ? Have I ever caused you pain ? Have I ever looked on another ? Do I not live for you alone ? (*She weeps.*) Lysias, it is wrong to grieve an unhappy woman who is mad for you. But there is a goddess Nemesis who sees those things.

* "Little honey-bread."

† "Little Cymbal."

‡ "Redthroat."

CONTEMPT

Perhaps you will cry soon enough in your turn when you hear that I have strangled myself in bed with a lace, or that I have thrown myself head first down a well, or that I have found death some way rather than trouble you by the sight of me. You will triumph then as though you had achieved a brilliant action. . . . But why look down on me and grind your teeth? If you have any complaints to make against me, speak. Pythias will judge between us. . . . What have you the matter? . . . (*Lysias leaves.*) You go without answering me and leaving me there? . . . (*She weeps.*) Pythias, do you see how Lysias makes me suffer!

PYTHIAS

Thick-skin not to be melted by these tears! You are a stone. You are no man! (*To Joessa.*) It must be said that you have done your work in spoiling him by over love and letting him see it. You should not have sought him so much. Men become contemptuous when they see that. Poor darling, don't cry. If you will believe me, close the door on his visits once or twice and you will see him soon warm and in his turn become mad on you.

JOESSA (*always weeping*)

Oh, don't tell me that! Am I to shut my door on Lysias? Only if he is not the first to go!

CYPRIAN MASQUES

PYTHIAS

But he will return.

JOESSA

Pythias, you have done for us. He has heard you saying : " Leave him at the door."

LYSIAS (*without having heard*)

It's not for her sake that I return, Pythias. I refuse even to look at this woman any more. But for your sake. You must not think badly of me and say : Lysias is a dry fellow.

PYTHIAS

Lysias, you can be certain that I have said so.

LYSIAS

Then do you want me to endure this Joessa, who is crying now while she deceives me ? The other day I surprised her in bed with a young man !

PYTHIAS (*finding all that very natural*)

Lysias, after all she is a courtesan. But when did you find them in bed together ?

LYSIAS

It is almost five days ago . . . by Zeus ! Yes, five days ago. It was the second, and to-day we are the seventh. My father, knowing I was this virtuous girl's lover, shut me up, forbidding the porter to open for me. Not being able to

CONTEMPT

bear not being joined to her, I ordered Dromon to lower himself in front of the wall in the court on the lower side and to catch me on his shoulders, which he carried out without difficulty. . . . But why tell so much ? I passed over. I came here and found the door carefully shut. It was in the middle of the night. I did not push the door but raised it gently, as I had already done before. The door turned on its hinges and I entered without a sound. The whole world slept. I followed the wall with my fingers and I reached the bed. (*An interval.*)

JOESSA (*aside*)

Demeter, what will he say ? I am in an agony.

LYSIAS

As I only heard but one breathing, I thought at first that Lyde was sleeping with her. But not so, Pythias. Groping, I felt a delicate face without any beard, with a head shaved to the skin, from which perfumes ascended. At this moment had I had a sword, it would not have been long, know well. . . . Why do you both laugh ? Does my story seem ridiculous to you, Pythias ?

JOESSA (*laughing*)

Is that what caused you pain, Lysias ? It was Pythias sleeping with me.

CYPRIAN MASQUES

PYTHIAS (*ashamed*)

Joessa, don't tell him.

JOESSA

Why shouldn't I tell him? It was Pythias, my darling. I had sent for him to come and sleep together. I was so sorry not to have you.

LYSIAS

Was this young man shaved to the skin, Pythias? And in six days he has grown that amount of hair?

JOESSA

Lysias, he shaved it after an illness. His hair was falling. Pythias, show us, so that he can believe us. (Pythias lifts his locks.) There is the youth, the adulterer of whom you were jealous.

LYSIAS

There was no need to be, Joessa, was there? I was in love and I touched myself.

JOESSA (*in triumph*)

Then are you convinced? Do you want me to give you the pain you caused me? It's my turn to be angry, and rightly.

LYSIAS

No. Come for a drink and Pythias with us. It is fair that she joins in drinking to our peace.

CONTEMPT

JOESSA

She will join. Oh, what I have suffered over you, Pythias, best of young lovers !

PYTHIAS

But it has reconciled you. That's why you must bear me no grudge. Only I beg you, Lysias, mention my wig to nobody.

XII (IX)
THE UNLUCKY RETURN

PANNYCHIS, A Courtesan.

DORCAS, Her Slave.

PHILOSTRATOS, Her New Lover.

POLEMON, Her Ancient Lover.

THE UNLUCKY RETURN

DORCAS* (*running up*)

We are lost, mistress, lost? Polemon has returned rich from the war, by what they say. I saw him in a cloak with a purple band, in the midst of many slaves. As soon as his friends saw him they rushed to receive him. At that moment I saw the man who accompanied him abroad, behind him and I asked him: "Parmenon, tell me"—and I was the first in greeting him—"have you done anything for us and are you bringing us back any present from the war worth while?"

PANNYCHIS (*discontented*)

You should not have said that so quickly, but: "You are saved, thanks be to the gods, and above all to Zeus of Strangers and Athena of War! Mistress was always inquiring what you were doing and where you were." And it would have been much better if you had added: "She wept and thought always of Polemon."

DORCAS

I said all that to him from the beginning, but

* "Gazelle."

CYPRIAN MASQUES

I did not mention it, so as to repeat quickly to you what I had learnt. As soon as I came near to Parmenon, I began thus: "Parmenon, did your ears not tingle? for the mistress always thought of you in the middle of her tears, especially when someone came back from a battle where there had been plenty killed. Then she tore her hair and beat her breasts and wept at each news."

PANNYCHIS

Excellent, Dorcas. That was what was needed.

DORCAS

Then I asked him what I have just told you, and he answered: "Dorcas, we return in splendour."

PANNYCHIS

So he did not begin by saying that Polemon remembered me and that he hoped to find me alive?

DORCAS

He told me a good deal like that, but the important thing is that he talked to me about great wealth, vesture, slaves, ivory: as for money, they are bringing it back no longer counted by pieces but measured by the weight, and they have brought a mighty weight back. Parmenon himself has a large polygonal ring on his little finger with a three-coloured stone which

THE UNLUCKY RETURN

is red on the surface. When I left him he wanted to tell me how they had crossed the Halys, how they had killed a certain Tiridates and how Polemon behaved in a battle against the Pisiadians. I returned running to tell you, so that you can look into the situation. If Polemon arrives (and he will come as soon as he is freed from his friends)—if he is informed and finds Philostratos with us . . . what do you think he is going to do ?

PANNYCHIS

Dorcas, let us look for a cure for what has happened to us. It would not be noble to send off Philostratos, who gave me six thousand drachmas the other day. . . . Besides, he is a trader, and he makes me large promises. On the other hand I can hardly not receive this Polemon, returning with so much money. Besides, he is jealous. When he was poor he was already insufferable. Now what is he not going to do ?

DORCAS

Oh, there he is coming !

PANNYCHIS

I have lost my nerve, Dorcas. I don't know what excuse to make. I tremble.

DORCAS

Oh, this Philostratos comes too !

CYPRIAN MASQUES

PANNYCHIS

What is going to happen to me ? Would the earth would swallow me !

PHILOSTRATOS (*approaching*)

Why shouldn't we have a drink, Pannychis ?

PANNYCHIS (*under voice*)

Wretch, you have done for me. (*Raised voice.*)
Greeting to you, Polemon. You have been long enough in returning.

POLEMON

Who is this man coming near us ?

PANNYCHIS

. . . .

POLEMON

Are you silent ? Pannychis, it's excellent. Here am I come from Thermopylæ in five days to see this woman ! I deserved that and I thank you. Henceforth you shall no longer live at my expense.

PHILOSTRATOS

But you, who are you—the friend ?

POLEMON

Have you ever heard of a Polemon of Steiricus, son of Pandion, at first a colonel but now a commander of five thousand shields, who was Pannychis' lover when I believed his sentiments were human ?

THE UNLUCKY RETURN

PHILOSTRATOS

Well, captain of mercenaries, know that Pannychis is mine and that she has received six thousand florins and that she will soon receive as much again as soon as I have placed my cargo. So now, Pannychis, follow me and let that fellow play colonel among the Odrydians.

DORCAS

She is free and she will follow if she will.

PANNYCHIS (*low voice*)

What shall I do, Dorcas ?

DORCAS

It is best to return. It is impossible for you to stay with Polemon in a temper. It would only make him more jealous.

PANNYCHIS

If you wish it, let us return.

POLEMON

But I warn you that to-day will be the last time you will drink together. Not for nothing have I been practising the massacres I have. Parmenon, my Thracians ! Let the regiment bar the street ! Infantry in front, with the scouts and archers on the wings ! The rest in reserve !

PHILOSTRATOS

Are you speaking to little children, mercenary,

CYPRIAN MASQUES

that you think you can frighten us ? Have you ever killed a cock ? Have you ever seen warfare ? Perhaps you guarded a little rampart as a sergeant and I am still gentle with you.

POLEMON

You will know it before little time when you see us under spear with shining armour.

PHILOSTRATOS

Then all of you come here. I and this Tibios, for he is my only follower, will scatter you with showers of stones and oyster-shells alone so well that you will no longer know where to escape.

XIII (II)
THE TERROR OF MARRIAGE

MYRTION, a Courtesan.
PAMPHILOS, Her Lover.
DORIS, Her Slave.

THE TERROR OF MARRIAGE

MYRTION*

Pamphilos, you are marrying the daughter of Pheidon the pilot, and already they say you have. All the oaths you swore to me and all the tears have gone in smoke. You forget Myrtion now, and that, when I am with child, Pamphilos, at the eighth month. That is all I have drawn from your love, this pregnant belly you have given me, and soon I shall have to nurse a child . . . a very heavy charge on a courtesan ! For I shall not expose what I have conceived, and above all if it is a male child, but I shall call it Pamphilos and I will keep it as a consolation of love, and one day he will meet you and reproach you for having been faithless to his unhappy mother !

Besides, you are not marrying a pretty girl. I have seen her lately at the feast of the Thesmophoria with her mother, without thinking that she would soon stop my seeing Pamphilos again. Look at her yourself to begin with. Look at her face and her eyes for fear the day

* "Bay-myrtle."

comes to grieve you for having a wife with entirely glaucous eyes which squint looking one to the other. . . . You have seen Pheidon, the father of the betrothed. Look at his face and you will no longer need to look at his daughter.

PAMPHILOS

But you digress, Myrtion ! Am I going to hear you talk at length about these girls and marriages with pilots' families ? How do I know whether the bride is snub-nosed or beautiful ? or if Pheidon the Alopekethian (for I believe you wish to talk of him) has a marriageable daughter ? Even he is hardly my father's friend. I remember that they recently went to Law over an affair of navigation. He owed my father a talent but refused to pay and my father summoned him before the naval judges and had enough trouble to make him give in. He even told me that everything had not been paid. If I wanted to be married, would I have refused the daughter of this Demeas, who was general last year (she is my first cousin by my mother) in order to marry the daughter of Pheidon ? But from whom do you hear that ? Or have you, Myrtion, invented these empty and fantastic jealousies ?

MYRTION

Then you are not marrying ?

THE TERROR OF MARRIAGE

PAMPHILOS

Myrtion, you are mad or you are drunk. However, we were not over-intoxicated yesterday.

MYRTION (*showing her slave*)

It was this Doris who worried me. I had sent her to buy some woollen pieces for my belly and to make vow to the Lokheia* for me, and she told me that she had met Lesbia and that . . . but, Doris, better for you yourself to say what you have heard if you have not invented it.

DORIS

Mistress, may I be crushed if I lied. I was near the Prytaneion when Lesbia accosted me, laughingly, and told me: "Your lover Pamphilos is marrying the daughter of Pheidon." And as I did not believe her, she told me to glance when passing at your street where it was all covered with garlands and flute-players and there was sound of the feast and of folk chanting the Hymeneal.

MYRTION

And then what? Did you look, Doris?

DORIS

Quite true, and I saw all that she said.

* Name under which Artemis was worshipped by women in childbirth.

CYPRIAN MASQUES

PAMPHILOS

I understand the mistake. Lesbia did not entirely deceive you, Doris, and you told the truth to Myrtion, but you upset yourself for no reason. The marriage is not under our roof. I remember that my mother told me yesterday just after I left you : “ Pamphilos, your comrade Charmides, the son of your neighbour Aristainetos, is already marrying. He is settling himself ! And how long are you going to live with your courtesan ? ” But I paid no attention to what she said and I went away to sleep. This morning at dawn I went out, with the result that I saw nothing of what Doris has seen since. If you are not certain, go there again, Doris, and look carefully not at the street but at the door and see which is adorned with garlands. You will find it is that of the neighbours.

MYRTION

Pamphilos, you give me back my life. I would have hung myself if that had happened.

PAMPHILOS

But that would not have happened. I am not so mad as to forget Myrtion, and that when she is carrying child by me.

XIV (I)
THE ABANDONED

GLYKERA, A Young Courtesan.
THAIS, Her Friend.

THE ABANDONED

GLYKERA*

Thais, this soldier, the Acarnian, who used to keep Abrotonon and afterwards became in love with me, I mean the one who was always wearing purple and a cloak; do you know him or well, have you forgotten the man?

THAIST†

No, my little Glykera, I know him. He even revelled with us last year at the feast of Demeter. Well, what do you want to say?

GLYKERA

This bad Gorgona, whom I believed my friend, has intrigued so well that she has robbed me of him.

THAIS

And now he is yours no longer, and has made Gorgona his mistress?

GLYKERA

Yes, Thais, and the affair has hit me terribly hard.

* "The sweet."

† "The brilliant."

CYPRIAN MASQUES

THAIS

It's wicked, Glykera, but not unforeseen. These things happen to us who are courtesans. You must not hurt yourself nor abuse Gorgona. Abrotonon said no evil of you in the same circumstances, and yet you were friends. But I ask myself what that soldier finds good in her, if he isn't completely blind, and fails to see that her hair is sparse and far back on her forehead, her lips are livid and cadaverous, her neck is thin, her veins protrude, and her nose is long. She has only one quality. She is big and straight, and then her smile is very attractive.

GLYKERA

Then do you think, Thais, that the Acarnian loves her for her beauty? You do not know that the sorceress Chrysarion is her mother, this woman who knows the charms of Thessaly and can bring down the moon. They say that she flies at night. She must have turned this man's head by making him drink poisons, and now she ruins him.

THAIS

And you, my little Glykera, will ruin another. But you can say farewell to this one.

XV (IV)
THE INCANTATION

MELITTA, a Courtesan.
BACCHIS, Her Friend.
AKIS, Her Slave.

THE INCANTATION

MELITTA*

Bacchis, do you know of an old woman, one of these Thessalians, who perform incantations and know how to make even the most detestable woman charming? You could make use of her yourself, but go and find her and bring her to me. My raiment and my gold I would give with entire joy only to see Charinos return to me and hate Simiche!

BACCHIS†

What do you say? Is he no longer with you? Does Charinos visit Simiche, Melitta? He who quarrelled with his parents for you so often and refused that rich betrothed with her dowry of five talents? I recall having heard you say that.

MELITTA

All that is over, Bacchis. Five whole days have passed without my seeing him. He and Simiche drink under the roof of his comrade Pammenes.

* "Bee."

† "Bacchante."

CYPRIAN MASQUES

BACCHIS

Melitta, it is terrible what is happening to you. But why did you break from each other as well ? Doubtless it is not for a small cause.

MELITTA

I have nothing to say on that point. The day before yesterday I was returning from the Piræus, where he was gone, sent, I believe, by his father to handle a liability. He declined to know me when I ran towards him as by custom, and when I wished to embrace him he repelled me, saying :

“Go on with your armourer Hermotimos, or else go and see what is written on the walls of the Ceramicæ, where your names are cut on one column.”

“What Hermotimos ? ” I said. “What column are you talking about ? ”

But without answering me and without dining he went to bed with his back turned. I did all that I could think of. I took him in my arms. I tried to turn him over on my side. I kissed him between the shoulders. But nothing could soften him, and he said :

“If you continue, I shall go off immediately in the middle of the night.”

BACCHIS

All the same, do you know Hermotimos ?

THE INCANTATION

MELITTA

Would you could see me become still unhappier than I am, Bacchis, if I knew an armourer of the name of Hermotimos. In the morning the other man woke at cock-crow and left. Then I remembered what he said to me about the name written at the Ceramice and I sent Akis to see what there was. She only found this solitary inscription on the right of the entrance near the Dipylos : " Melitta loves Hermotimos," and a little lower : " The Armourer Hermotimos loves Melitta."

BACCHIS

What ideas the young ones have ! I follow. Someone wrote that to torture Charinos, knowing that he was jealous. He believed it on the spot. If I see him soon, I will speak to him about it. He is without experience, like the child he is.

MELITTA

But how will you see him ? He is shut up with Simiche. His parents came to find him under my roof. . . . Bacchis, if I could find an old woman as I described to you ! If she only showed herself she would save my life.

BACCHIS

There is, my dear, a very frequented sorceress, Syrian by race and still in her youth and vigour.

CYPRIAN MASQUES

Phanias left me like Charinos, without a reason. After four whole days she reconciled him with me, when I was already in despair, and by her enchantments she brought him back to me.

MELITTA

What did this old woman do, if you can still remember ?

BACCHIS

She does not take much for fee, Melitta. Only a florin and a loaf. But you must bring salt, seven pennies, sulphur and a torch of resin. The old woman takes all that. One must also pour some wine into a bowl and she is the one to drink it. Finally, you must have something of the man himself, for example clothing or shoes or some hair or other similar objects.

MELITTA

I have got his shoes.

BACCHIS

She hangs them on a nail, burns sulphur below, scatters salt on the fire repeating your names—those of your lover and yourself. Then she draws a top from her breast and turns it round, reciting the charm with a rapid voice. Barbarous words enough to make you tremble. That is what she did for me, and very soon Phanias, in spite of the reproaches of his comrades and of Phoibis with whom he lived

THE INCANTATION

and who entreated him, came back to me. He was driven by the charm. She even taught me the way to make Phoibis hated. Watch the tracks of her feet when she has just passed and wipe them out by placing the right foot where she put her left and the left foot where she put her right, saying : "I have walked over you. I am on top of you." And I did what she told me.

MELITTA

No delay, no delay, Bacchis ! Call the Syrian immediately. And Akis, you get ready the sulphur and all that is needed for the incantation.

PHANTASIA, NEAR BAYREUTH,

August-September, 1892.

